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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY.

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND METHOD OF PROCEDURE IN ORGANIZING POULTRY CLUBS.

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UPON beginning poultry club work in a State where it is first being introduced, it is advisable to get definite knowledge of the counties in which the work is to be done. This is usually accomplished by having a conference with the State leaders in demonstration work, having them suggest a few counties wherein they think the work will be acceptable and definite cooperation will be extended by the county agents in charge.

During the first year it is advisable to undertake work in only a few counties where the local agents are appointed for practically the whole year, if possible counties that are close to one another, so that unnecessary travel may be avoided. After the counties have been definitely decided upon, a general survey should be made by a visit to each one, in company with the county canning club and county farm agent in charge, so as to become familiar with existing conditions, and to formulate definite plans for the organizing campaign. In each county a definite outline should be formed with the county agents as to the amount of time they will be able to devote to the work and the number of schools that will be undertaken for the year.

In this case it is well to adhere to the rule that a few schools well organized the first year in each county will create a foundation upon which future work can be extended. At this point it must be emphasized that the teacher in charge of a school is one of the most important factors in any form of rural organization. Upon the teacher depends much of the future success or failure of the club work. Her cooperation and interest should be obtained and maintained to produce the best results.

After the bulletins have been sent to each child on the list, ample to be begun, plans should be made to undertake the organizing campaign by visiting each of the schools which have been decided upon, in company with the county canning club or home demonstration agent. In many cases it has been found that where the county superintendent of schools is definitely interested in club work, and accompanies the poultry club agent on his tour through the county, more satisfactory results are obtained.

In visiting the schools give the children a talk on poultry, with the idea of interesting them in this subject, explaining the purpose of organizing poultry clubs among the children and the importance of the poultry industry in general. Explain how boys and girls by engaging in this work can establish for themselves a profitable, pleasant

business, which will not only assist them financially but at the same time will assist them in becoming acquainted with other branches of agriculture and make them more proficient in their regular school work. Mention to the children the fact that prizes and exhibits will be arranged for this work, as in the canning and corn clubs. At all events try to stimulate as much interest as possible. After the talk get the names, addresses, and ages of the children who are interested in the poultry work, placing this information on the club enrollment blank. Explain to the children that their names on this list obligates them in no way except to consider the idea of joining the poultry club and to read the bulletins which will be sent to them, so as to obtain a more definite knowledge of the poultry club and its workings.

After the bulletins have been sent to each child on the list, ample time should be given for the children to read them and discuss the matter with their parents. A second visit to the school should then be made if possible, with the idea of organizing those who wish to join the club, checking off those who do not wish to take up the work and getting those who desire to become members to fill in the application card. The method of organizing should be followed as outlined in the bulletin on the organization of poultry clubs.

Prior to the organization of the club, arrangements should be made with local breeders of poultry to supply sittings of eggs to members at prices not exceeding \$1 a sitting. It is advisable in many instances to issue each year in the form of a circular a list of poultrymen who have agreed to supply eggs for hatching to members of the poultry clubs at reduced prices, such a list giving the names and addresses, variety of fowls kept, and prices per sitting of eggs. Try to get one or more poultrymen in each community to donate a pen of birds or several sittings of eggs, to be awarded as prizes to the members that write the best composition on poultry management.

Make arrangements with the teacher in charge to have all the members write compositions in their own words on poultry management. They will get their information for this composition from the bulletins sent them, and follow the outline, A. H. Form 152, which will be supplied for a composition on the subject. An effort should be made to have the teacher give them credit for the composition as a part of their regular school work.

Make an effort to have the members agree to hold a meeting of their poultry club at least once a month, and there read or discuss subjects or experiences pertaining to the work. Such meetings may be held in connection with the school league or literary society, with one of the teachers presiding, and an invitation given to the patrons to be present. It would be well also to have one of the local poultrymen present at each of the meetings, to give a talk on some poultry subject.

As soon as weather conditions permit, have the members obtain their eggs and follow the plan of testing their eggs, hatching, and brooding, as outlined in their bulletins, keeping a record of their work on the poultry club members' reports. Such demonstrations as the candling of eggs, to show the members the difference between fertile, infertile, and dead-germ eggs, are always interesting and profitable during the hatching season. In all cases emphasize the fact that members are not required to purchase any expensive equipment, such

as incubators, or to build separate houses and yards; but urge them to do the best they can by improving such buildings and equipment as they have at home. The only investment necessary is that of buying one or more sittings of pure-bred eggs from some reliable breeder.

USUAL PLAN OF PROCEDURE IN ORGANIZING POULTRY CLUBS.

In many instances it has been found advisable to leave with the teacher in charge of the school where the work has been begun a definite plan, showing her the steps to be taken in carrying on the poultry club work. Such a plan may be issued in circular form, or incorporated in a letter, following this suggested outline:

1. The children, together with the teacher, should read thoroughly the latest available Farmers' Bulletins on poultry.

2. In the event that the State agent or county agent can not return to the school immediately to organize the club, the teacher in charge should enroll those children who are interested and want to join, on a copy of the membership record, sending it to the State agent in a self-addressed envelope supplied by the latter.

3. A brief synopsis of the plan for organizing poultry clubs, such as given above, may be given to the teacher in charge, the idea being to follow this plan as closely as possible in organizing and conducting the work.

4. After the bulletins are read and the club is organized, the teacher is requested to assign to the members the composition on poultry management, following the outline, A. H. Form 152, which should be supplied to them by the State poultry agent, the children getting their information from the bulletins and answering the questions as indicated.

5. After the compositions have been written and submitted to the teacher, she will correct them, following a marked outline which should indicate after each question the bulletin and page number where the answer to that question may be found. Such a marked outline will enable the teacher to mark the compositions intelligently, and at the same time increase her interest and knowledge regarding poultry work. After the compositions have been written and graded, and the application card filled in by those desiring to join, the members will proceed to select the breed they desire to raise from the breeders' list furnished them or from some other breeder of pure-bred eggs. The method of procedure should then be followed as outlined under the headings of "Setting the Hen" and "Natural Incubation" in the bulletins which they have previously read.

6. As soon as the eggs are set, consideration should be given to the poultry club reports, which are self-explanatory, keeping a record of the work under the proper headings. These reports, taking up the work step by step, constitute the complete record for each member, and are furnished to the members after the work is organized.

SENIOR CLUBS.

In many cases it has been found advisable to organize poultry clubs among the patrons of the school, or among farmers and their wives, with the idea of creating an interest in poultry among the older people,

and working hand in hand with the members of the boys' and girls' poultry clubs. In several localities community poultry clubs have been organized among the older people, with the idea of raising for their mutual and individual benefit one breed and variety of pure-bred poultry, and in that way creating a more general interest in the larger output of standard-bred poultry and uniform poultry products.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH POULTRY CLUBS.

Egg-testing demonstration.—Show the difference between fertile, infertile, and dead-germ eggs, as they appear when candling, and when broken into a saucer, at the end of seven days' incubation. Call special attention to the difference between the fertile and the infertile egg with reference to the production of the latter for table purposes. Use the egg placard to supplement this demonstration. Study the parts of an egg by hard boiling one for five minutes and separating it into four parts—shell, membrane, white, and yolk.

Demonstrate the method of dusting a sitting hen so as to eliminate insect pests.

Have children make plans of and construct several practical brood coops out of box lumber. A model of a poultry house constructed by a member of the club will prove to be an interesting object for study. A trip to a near-by poultry plant may impress the members as to the management of such a plant and construction of the buildings used.

A feather exhibit may be arranged by having the members bring to school feathers of different breeds and varieties of fowls for comparison, classification, and study.

A judging contest held prior to the county fair, with a demonstration of selecting and fitting a fowl for exhibition, will be a great help to those who will exhibit their birds.

Several dozens of eggs borrowed from the local grocer or contributed by the members would make an interesting study and demonstration of selecting proper eggs for hatching, market, and exhibition. The proper method of packing eggs for shipment would be an additional feature of such a demonstration. After the eggs have been used for these studies, they could be used advantageously to demonstrate how to preserve eggs in water-glass solution for home use, the eggs being actually preserved for future use.

To show the children and their parents the way to caponize and how to kill and dry-pick a fowl would be of much value in many communities.

These and many other demonstrations may be conducted so as to stimulate interest and knowledge regarding some of the fundamentals of poultry work.